



History and Future of the Contractor Education Seminars & Trade Shows

History

The Contractors State License Board is preparing for its 5th Annual Contractor Education Seminar and Trade Show Series.

In 1999 the Board held its first series of seminars in seven cities in California. It was hoped that these seminars would bring helpful information to the contractors as business and trades persons. The seminar topics have always focused on the importance of a good construction contract, good business and trade practices, and a positive working relationship with government agencies.

Based on contractors' responses to CSLB surveys, these events were scheduled for November through January on weekday evenings. However, in 2002 we discovered our biggest attendance was at the Saturday morning and weekday mid-morning events. So in 2003 we plan to have only daytime events.

Slowly each year the attendance has grown at the seminars as the word is spread about the good information being provided. Contractors especially like the opportunity to be able to interact directly with CSLB staff and other agency professionals. The contractors are eager to learn and improve their skills. In 1999 the average attendance was 150. In 2002 the average attendance was 500. We had so many registrants that some were asked to travel to other cities in order to attend, and those sites were packed on the day of the event. In 2003, sites that will hold 500-2,000 persons are being selected. We will continue to hold one-day events until demand and budget dictates otherwise.

We have always promoted the seminars as "Free, Fast, and Fascinating." We hope that by offsetting cost this year with a larger trade show, the attendance will continue to grow while the seminars and trade shows continue to be free for contractors.

Future

In 2002 a small trade show was added to the seminars. The trade show was an instant success resulting in many positive comments from the contractors on the quality of the exhibits. Contractors often do not have time to shop around to see what is available for their businesses, so the seminars are a great place for them to network. The 2002 exhibitors rated the events "outstanding" and wanted to participate again.

In addition, this year's sites were chosen especially to encourage contractors to come a day early or stay the night of the event. We have selected resort sites and one very important historical site (USS Hornet). Golfing and tour packages are under negotiation.